

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1776

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 294

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENGR, IZ

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH GULF OIL PRODUCERS

REF: STATE 45225; BAGHDAD 254

1. ON MARCH 17 I MET WITH ACTING DG FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN MFA BURHAN MOHAMMAD MURI, AND CONVEYED POINTS CONTAINED STATE REFTEL, MOST OF WHICH HAD EARLIER BEEN CONVEYED TO DG OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS (BAGHDAD REFTEL). ALTHOUGH NURI IS CAREER DIPLOMAT OF 12 YEARS SERVICE (NEW YORK, LONDON, VIENNA, BAHRAIN) AND AN ECONOMIST, HE DID NOT SEEM FULLY CONVERSANT WITH OIL MATTERS AND SAID HE DID NOT HANDLE THEM DIRECTLY. THIS NOT SURPRISING SINCE MFA HAS LITTLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OIL POLICY WHICH IS HANDLED BY FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE HEADED BY SADDAM HUSSEIN AND WHOSE SECRETARY GENERAL IS ADNAN AL-HAMDANI, MEMBER OF REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ONE OF SADDAM'S CLOSEST CONFIDANTS.

2. NEVERTHELESS, NURI WAS VERY INTERESTED IN MY MESSAGE AND TOOK NOTES AND SUMMARIZED MAJOR POINTS TO MAKE SURE HE HAD THEM CORRECTLY. I PARTICULARLY STRESSED POINTS ABOUT U.S. INTEREST IN SPECIFIC IDEAS AND ASKED WHAT GOI ENVISAGES COMING OUT OF P/C CONFERENCE. I ALSO GAVE HIM COPY OF SECRETARY'S FEBRUARY 4 SPEECH AND OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ENDERS' INTERVIEW FROM MARCH 8 WIRELESS FILE.

3. NURI SAID GOI POSITION WAS (A) NO FONFRONTATION, BUT COOPERATIVE SOLUTIONS; (B) INDEXING OF OIL PRICE BASED ON COMBINATION OF
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MANUFACTURED GOODS, SEMI-MANUFACTURED GOODS, RAW MATERIALS, AND

SERVICES; (C) REFORM OF MONETARY SYSTEM; AND (D) FLOW OF CAPITAL TO MOST AFFECTED COUNTRIES BY PRODUCERS AND OTHERS. HE SAID IRAQ HAD MADE LOANS AND GRANTS OF ABOUT 850 MILLION DOLLARS IN 1974.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH DISCUSSION WAS IN GENERALITIES, I WAS PLEASED WITH INTEREST AND RECEPTION. RECOMMEND THEREFORE THAT WE CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THIS DIALOGUE WITH GOI. DURING SAME MEETING NURI INFORMED ME THAT GOI OFFICIALLY WELCOMED VISIT OF ALLIS CHALMERS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD DAVID SCOTT IN MAY AND WOULD ARRANGE MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETINGS FOR HIM.
LOWRIE

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NNN

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